

Volunteer Policy

This document is relevant to:	
Volunteers	✓

Purpose

Dorset Mind recognises that Volunteers can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and service objectives of the organisation and that it provides individuals with opportunities to be involved and learn new skills. Dorset Mind strives to be a 'volunteer friendly' organisation.

Policy

Introduction

Dorset Mind recognises that volunteers play a vital role in the charity and that without volunteers Dorset Mind would not be able to deliver its services. Dorset Mind will not exploit volunteers by making unfair demands on their time or by asking them to do something which is against their principles or beliefs. Dorset Mind will encourage volunteers to play a part in the decision making processes of the charity.

Dorset Mind will support volunteers to work safely and effectively and will recognise their contribution appropriately. In return Dorset Mind asks volunteers to recognise that they are representing the charity and to accept their obligations in this.

Dorset Mind will encourage users of its own services to undertake volunteering roles within the service they use and also the charity as a whole.

Volunteer Definition

Volunteers (this does not include students on work placements) may be described as individuals who offer their experience, knowledge and skills to an organisation, free of charge, with the aim of helping it achieve its service objectives and/or with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community.

Principles

In appointing Volunteers, Dorset Mind will apply the following principles:

- Dorset Mind employees will not be engaged as Volunteers at Dorset Mind
- Dorset Mind will aim to ensure that roles undertaken by volunteers provide good and meaningful experience depending on the needs of the individual
- Dorset Mind recognises that Volunteers have the choice to undertake an activity or not
- Dorset Mind expects Volunteers to be committed to its work and its ethos

- Dorset Mind recognises Volunteers as a valuable contributor to its work and of the individual skills of each Volunteer.

Equal Opportunities

Dorset Mind recognises that volunteering can provide volunteers with experiences and opportunities for their personal and career development. In accordance with the Dorset Mind Equal Opportunity Policy, volunteer placements will therefore be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status. If, during the initial discussion a prospective Volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equal opportunity policy, she/he will be deemed automatically to be unsuitable for a volunteer position.

Termination of Volunteers Role

Where appropriate, the Volunteer may be asked to leave by the Chief Executive at one week's notice, or immediately, in some circumstances. In all cases the Volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken.

Review of Volunteers Role

With the exception of volunteer befrienders, volunteering opportunities will normally be reviewed after 12 months to ensure that all those who wish to take advantage of such opportunities are able to do so.

Safeguarding

At all times Dorset Mind will be aware of its obligations under its Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Safeguarding Children policies and if any reported conduct harms or could have harmed a vulnerable adult or child then the volunteer will be suspended from their duties while the matter is dealt with (which may include referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority).

Discipline and Grievance

Volunteers will not be subject to the Dorset Mind disciplinary procedures. Correspondingly, Volunteers will not have access to the Dorset Mind grievance procedures. However, Volunteers will be entitled to use the Dorset Mind Complaints Procedure. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by the Chief Executive or her/his representative.

Expenses

Volunteers will be entitled to travel expenses, including from home to base, and those working more than 5 hours a day can claim reasonable expenses for lunch (against receipts), but may not receive payment for any other reason.

Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by the Dorset Mind employers, public liability and professional indemnity where appropriate. If Volunteers use their own vehicle whilst volunteering for Dorset Mind they must ensure they have the appropriate insurance cover, driving licence and MOT certificates. In accordance with the Health and Safety Policy Dorset Mind will keep copies of the appropriate documentation on file.

Health & Safety

As a part of their induction Volunteers will receive information about the Dorset Mind Health & Safety Policy and associated policies and procedures. Failure to follow these procedures is very likely to result in termination of the volunteering opportunity. Volunteers should raise any concerns they have about their own health & safety or that of other people on the premises with their appointed manager.

Policies and Procedures

Besides the Health & Safety Policy Volunteers will be expected to abide by other Dorset Mind policies as appropriate such as Confidentiality, Data Protection, Equal Opportunities, IT, Safeguarding.

Training and Involvement

Where a Volunteer is based at Dorset Mind on a day to day basis she/he will be expected to be involved and included in general staff activities such as staff meetings.

Volunteers will receive, and be expected to attend, training sessions to enable them to undertake their tasks.

Monitoring and Review

It will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive to annually review the operation of the Dorset Mind Volunteer Policy to ensure that it is in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Policy.

ID Cards

Dorset Mind recognises that volunteers may need to be able to identify themselves to members of the public, service users and others and will provide an ID card for this purpose.

Dorset Mind Property

From time to time, Dorset Mind may need to provide items to volunteers to enable them to carry out their role (eg memory sticks). These items will remain the property of Dorset Mind and must be surrendered on request or upon termination of volunteering.

Responsibilities

The Chair of Trustees is responsible for managing this policy and overseeing its implementation. The Chief Executive is responsible for implementing the policy within their areas of work, and for overseeing adherence by volunteers. Every volunteer should take personal responsibility for conforming to it.

Associated Policies and Procedures

- Volunteer Procedure

The equality impact of this policy has been considered and Dorset Mind believes that it complies with its commitment to equality as stated in its Equality Policy

Policy Ownership

Policy Name	Version	Doc ref
Volunteer Policy	1.0	Volunteer Policy

Policy Owner	Chair of Trustees
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Approval Status

Date adopted by Trustees	December 2015		
Date published	December 2015	Date for next review	December 2017

Consult the Dorset Mind website for the latest version of this policy.

Document Control

Reviewers

Name	Position
Chris Price	Chair of Trustees
Anna Windett	Trustee
Rob Griffiths	Staff

Change History

Issue	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	Dec 15	Chris Price	New policy